



NEWS RELEASE

HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF POLICE
OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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Teen Charged with Poisoning Friend *17-year-old Victim in Critical Condition After Ingesting Cyanide*

Howard County Police have charged an Ellicott City teenager with poisoning his friend by putting potassium cyanide in his drink. Ryan Thomas Furlough, 18, of 3505 Rhode Valley Trail, was charged with attempted murder, assault and poisoning. The victim, 17-year-old Benjamin Vassiliev of Ellicott City, is in critical condition.

The two teens were spending time at Furlough's residence Friday evening when Vassiliev went into respiratory arrest. Paramedics arrived on the scene and transported Vassiliev to Howard County General Hospital. After receiving preliminary treatment, he was taken to Johns Hopkins Medical Institute in Baltimore where doctors suspected he had been poisoned and administered the antidote for cyanide. Vassiliev remains at Hopkins and his condition is still critical.

Through investigation, detectives learned that Furlough purchased cyanide on the Internet. Detectives executed a search warrant at the Furlough residence and seized a cardboard box labeled "Hazardous Material" and "Potassium Cyanide." The investigation revealed that Furlough put the poison in Vassiliev's soda can.

Furlough received no bond and currently is at the Howard County Detention Center in Jessup.

Additional information will be released as it becomes available.

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Editor's Note: The Office of Public Affairs will hold a news briefing about this case at 12:00 p.m. at Howard County Police Headquarters, 3410 Courthouse Drive, Ellicott City. A public information officer will review the details of this release and respond to questions at that time.